

# OUR TOWN

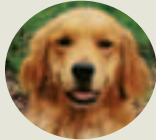
THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

DECEMBER 2009



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## LAH BY THE NUMBERS:

Area: 8.5 square miles

Number of streets:  
310 (183 public,  
127 private)

Number of  
residences: 2,877

Population: 8,837

Number of residents  
that are active  
CERT trained: 91

## LAH COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT AT A GLANCE:

Three full shifts of  
4-person Fire Company,  
cross-trained for fire-  
fighting, medical  
response, and  
rescue/extraction

Additional 3-person  
wild-land team with  
specialized engine, staffed  
during fire season

Number of calls for  
service in 2008:  
two per day (average)

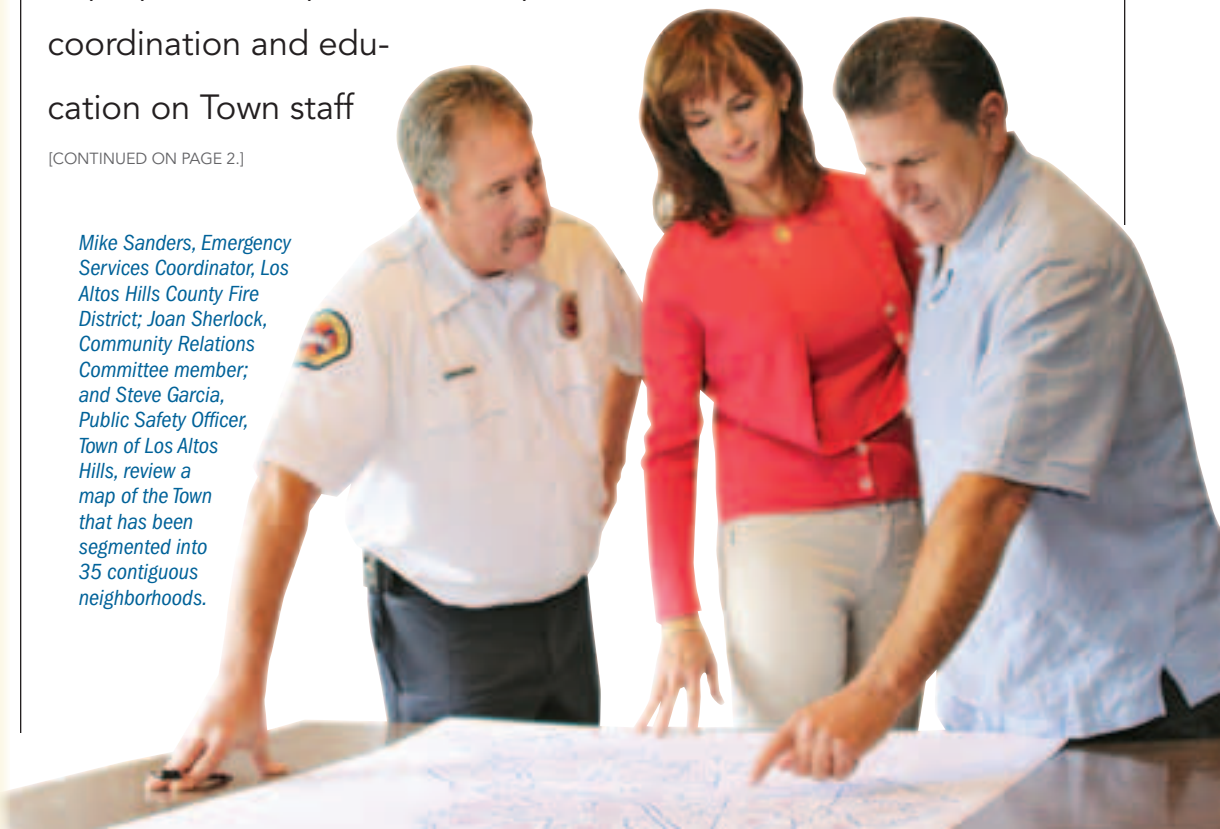


## Getting to Know Your Neighbors

Back in the early 90's, the Town had a Neighborhood Emergency Network to facilitate safety and emergency efforts if a town wide emergency took place. The Town is now working with the Community Relations Committee and the Los Altos Hills County Fire District (LAHCFD) to bring this great program back to our community under a new name — the Neighborhood Network Program. This network will enable effective implementation of preparedness plans without placing the entire burden for coordination and education on Town staff

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*Mike Sanders, Emergency Services Coordinator, Los Altos Hills County Fire District; Joan Sherlock, Community Relations Committee member; and Steve Garcia, Public Safety Officer, Town of Los Altos Hills, review a map of the Town that has been segmented into 35 contiguous neighborhoods.*



The program combines training efforts by the Santa Clara County Fire Department and the Los Altos Hills County Fire District with an opportunity to host an event. At the event you can get to know your neighbors and sign-up for neighborhood responsibilities in case of emergency. You will also learn more about Community Emergency Response Team

(CERT) and Personal Emergency Preparedness (PEP) training. The Fire District hopes to have one CERT trained emergency coordinator for each area.

### How the Program Works

- A detailed map of the town has been segmented into 35 neighborhoods.
- Residents for each segment will be encouraged to host a neighborhood

party or event where people can meet to learn more about the emergency training and get to know their neighbors.

- To get started, you decide when you would like to have the event, then fill out the invitation form on the town website [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/neighborhood-network](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/neighborhood-network).
- Once you click the "submit" button on the form, a representative will contact you and the Town will mail the invitation to all your neighbors in your map segment.
- You can see sample mailers on the website, and will get a chance to proof your invite before it goes out.
- If you would like, a representative from the Los Altos Hills County Fire District will speak at the event and supply you with additional handouts.

## COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

The Town of Los Altos Hills and Los Altos Hills County Fire District sponsored Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) has been a great success. Trained CERT members now exceed 90 residents, including 6 specially trained supervisors.



Following a disaster, coordinators for their area can organize their teams to conduct neighborhood checks and collect disaster related information. Teams can check neighbors known to have special needs, provide first aid, conduct light search and rescue and fire suppression. Disaster related information collected by neighborhood teams is transmitted to the Town's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with the help of volunteer amateur radio operators, also known as ham radio operators.

The goal of the CERT program is to have CERT trained residents and volunteers in all of the Unincorporated areas (17) and the Town (35) Neighborhood Network neighborhoods.

### Top reasons why people should attend a CERT class:

**1** Every citizen must be prepared to take care of themselves in the event of a disaster. This free class will cover all aspects

of disaster planning and what they can do to become more prepared.

**2** Los Altos Hills is situated in a major fire hazard area. Numerous homes do not have the proper defensible space needed in order for the fire department to effectively save their home from a major fire.

**3** Not all homeowners know how to properly shut off their utilities or when to shut them off in a disaster.

**4** Food and water might not be available. Citizens need to have a minimum of 3 days of food and water stored so they can get to it in case of a disaster.

**5** The American Red Cross has stated that a major earthquake will strike the Bay Area within the next 30 years. Two years ago the Red Cross stated that only 17% of residents are prepared for a major earthquake.

At the completion of the PEP class every family will receive a Home Disaster Supply Kit, good for 4 people for a three day period.

The next CERT class is Tuesday evening, May 4, 2010. Please call Mike Sanders at 650-922-1055 to reserve your spot in the May 2010 CERT class.

Personal Emergency Preparedness training for you, your family and neighbors is also available through Mike Sanders. To learn more about CERT, please call Steve Garcia at 650-947-2508.



**This program will increase neighborhood awareness, fellowship and familiarity with many people in your immediate vicinity.**

This program will increase neighborhood awareness, fellowship and familiarity with many people in your immediate vicinity. It will also help us spot any people with special needs who should be helped in case of emergency. For more information on the CERT or PEP classes contact Michael Sanders at [mike.sanders@cmt.sccgov.org](mailto:mike.sanders@cmt.sccgov.org). For more information on the Neighborhood Network Program or help setting up your event, please contact Joan Sherlock of the Community Relations Committee at [joan@wildsage.com](mailto:joan@wildsage.com).

*Joan Sherlock, Member, Community Relations Committee*



### TO LEARN MORE:

Visit the Los Altos Hills County Fire District at [www.lahcfd.org](http://www.lahcfd.org) and the Santa Clara County Fire Department at [www.sccfd.org](http://www.sccfd.org).



## FROM THE CITY MANAGER

# ANNEXATION OF Hidden Villa

**A**t the direction of the Mayor and City Council, the Town Planning Department is preparing a pre-zoning application and Urban Service Area amendment which are necessary steps that the Town must take prior to conducting an annexation of the territory known as the Lands of Hidden Villa. Hidden Villa is a nonprofit educational organization that uses its organic farm and wilderness to teach and provide opportunities to learn about the environment, sustainable agricultural practices and other cultures. Hidden Villa stretches over 1600 acres of open space adjacent to the Town of Los Altos Hills and is already in the Town's Sphere of Influence (SOI). An SOI is the physical boundary and service area that a local governmental agency is expected to serve.

An annexation is the process by which a city changes its boundaries and adds land or territory. Any proposal to amend the Town's Urban Service Area boundary or to add land to the Town must be reviewed and approved by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) for Santa Clara County. LAFCO is a state mandated local agency set up to oversee the boundaries of cities and special districts. An annexation does not transfer ownership of real property and improvements.



The Town has no plans to purchase, manage or maintain Hidden Villa. All but approximately 55 acres of the 1600+ acre property are under open space conservation easements granted to the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District.

Because most of the Hidden Villa property is protected open space and agricultural land with a few structures and no public improvements such as streets, it is not anticipated that there will be any substantive impact on existing municipal services. However, prior to a final recommendation and decision on annexation, a fiscal analysis consistent with the Town's Annexation Policy will be prepared for City Council and public review.

The Hidden Villa Board of Directors has also formally expressed its unanimous support and interest in exploring annexation to the Town. There are several reasons why an annexation makes sense both to the Town and Hidden Villa. The Town is the most logical agency to provide services to Hidden Villa such as building permits for periodic improvements to the property necessary to support the organization's mission and many programs. Annexation would enable the Town and Hidden Villa to more easily partner on local community programs including workshops, concerts, discussions, and forums for families and individuals interested in sustainable practices, animal husbandry, and nature. This proposed annexation is not for the purpose of development.

For more information on Hidden Villa, or if you plan to visit, please check their website: [www.hiddenvilla.org](http://www.hiddenvilla.org). For more information with regard to the annexation process, please contact Planning Director Debbie Pedro at [dpedro@losaltoshills.ca.gov](mailto:dpedro@losaltoshills.ca.gov)

## FROM THE PLANNING DIRECTOR

## The U.S. Census is Coming – Why is it Important?

**C**ensus Day is April 1, 2010. The Town of Los Altos Hills is partnering with the U.S. Census Bureau to help promote the 2010 Census and encourage community participation. The census is an effort to count every person residing in the United States, including people of all races and ethnic groups, both citizens and non-citizens. The U.S. Constitution mandates a national census every 10 years. The key to the success of this endeavor is receiving a response from everyone. The Town is asking that every household fill out and mail back the completed census

form. Los Altos Hills residents should expect to receive census questionnaires in March 2010. Census workers will visit households that do not return a questionnaire between April and July 2010.

Participation is critical, as the census population totals determine representation in the U.S. House of Representatives and in state and local governments. It also determines the distribution of more than \$400 billion annually in government funding for schools, roads, hospitals, and more.

The 2010 Census will have one of the shortest census questionnaires in the history of the United States. The questionnaire will ask for your name, gender, race, ethnicity, relationship, and whether you own or rent your home. The census form will take about 10 minutes to complete.

Answers are protected by law and strictly confidential. Additional Census 2010 information will be available at Town Hall and the Town's website. For more information, visit <http://www.census.gov>.

*Debbie Pedro, Planning Director*



LOS ALTOS HILLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

# A HOLIDAY MEETING AT THE DUENECK HOUSE AT HIDDEN VILLA

The Dueneck Ranch, Hidden Villa has a very colorful past. It was once the location of a picturesque windmill from former ranch days when cattle freely roamed the hillsides. Some of the oldest buildings at the upper end of the farm date back to the days of stagecoach travel. The old stage road to the coast ran for a short period from San Jose to



A major part of this area is a gift from Frank and Josephine Dueneck who offered it as a gathering place for learning and enjoyment. In 1937 the first youth hostel on the Pacific Coast was established, and in 1945 they organized the first multiracial summer camp. Hidden Villa's current Environmental Education Program has been offered since 1970.



Pescadero. Travelers stopped overnight at the white ranch house, while the wooden barn housed horses.

In the 1920s Hidden Villa became the home of Josephine and Frank Dueneck. They purchased the 2,000-acre ranch in 1924 and moved there with their four children after building the Mediterranean-style house in 1929. Another family farmed on the valley floor.



Marc Sidel, the Hidden Villa Associate Director of Development, will give a tour of the historical Dueneck House. Please join us for the Holiday meeting of the Los Altos Hills Historical Society, Sunday, December 6, 2009, 2:00 - 4:30 pm, at Hidden Villa, 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos Hills. RSVP by calling 650-776-9226. The directions and map will be mailed with the Historical Society's December newsletter. For information about Los Altos Hills Historical Society, please visit [www.losaltoshillshistory.org](http://www.losaltoshillshistory.org).



## Recruiting Youth Commissioners

A new Youth Commission has been formed as part of the Community Relations Committee for the purpose of coordinating and organizing youth participation and volunteerism in both Town-sponsored and community-wide activities. The Committee is currently seating two or more Los Altos Hills students from each of the area High Schools to represent their school. Each

will serve as Youth Associate Members of the LAH Community Relations Committee. Some youth have already applied and more are being sought. It is a great way for youth to get involved in our Town and community and to gain valuable experience. If interested, please contact Allika Walvekar at [11allikaw@students.harker.org](mailto:11allikaw@students.harker.org) for information and to obtain an application.



## YEAR-ROUND RIDING PROGRAM:

## Beijing Olympic Silver Medalist Inspires Local Equestrians

**G**ina Miles, equestrian silver medalist in the Beijing Olympics, taught at Westwind Barn in August and November, 2009. Gina taught approximately 12 students, ranging in age from 9 years to 17 years of age in the lower arena at Westwind Barn. All of these students were members of Pacific Ridge Pony Club based at Westwind Barn and approximately half of these students were graduates of Los Altos Hills Parks and Recreation year-round riding program and/or summer riding camps.

Like many of the Pony Clubbers at Westwind, Gina began riding as youth at a local barn and then became a Pony Clubber. Her story of success inspires many at Westwind to strive to be the best they can be.



## LAH Parks & Recreation on Facebook

**L**os Altos Hills Parks and Recreation now has a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/LosAltosHillsParksandRec](http://www.facebook.com/LosAltosHillsParksandRec)) that provides information on upcoming programs and events. The page has added over 200 "fans" and "friends" since its inception in September. Facebook's mission is to give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. Join Parks and Recreation today and don't miss out on exciting upcoming programs and activities.

## Training Your Dog



**T**here is a hidden gem in our community that should not be kept a secret. Los Altos Hills has teamed together with The City of Los Altos to offer a weekly class in Rally Obedience Training – a relatively new AKC (American Kennel Club) sponsored event, which produces wonderful trained dogs that can bring you a lifetime of pleasure. In addition, you and your family can participate in AKC Dog Show events. To register, call Eric Christensen at 941-7222, [echristensen@losaltoshills.ca.gov](mailto:echristensen@losaltoshills.ca.gov).

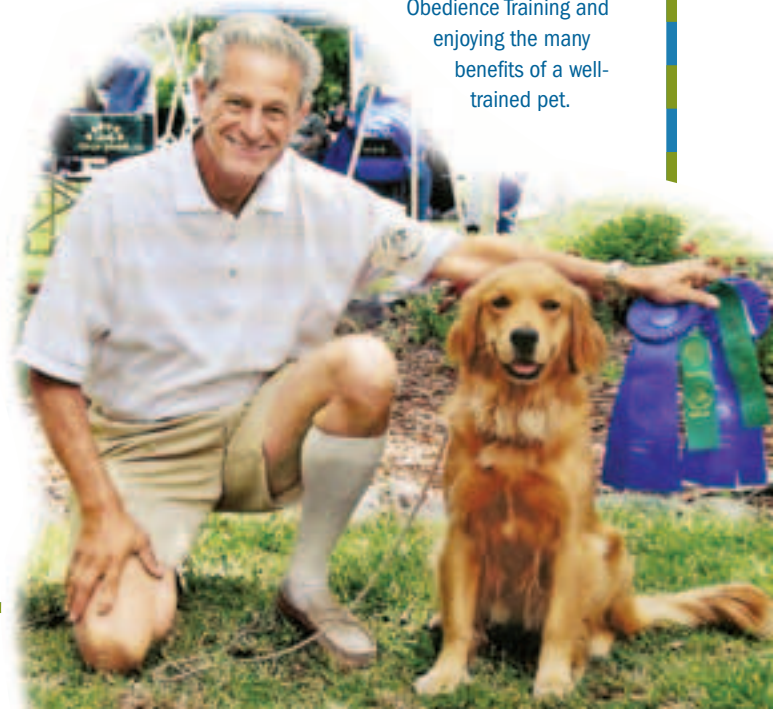
We are fortunate to have these classes taught by long-time LAH residents and certified AKC Dog show Judges Rosalie & Pat Alvarez. Rosalie also serves as the Training Director of our local Deep Peninsula Dog Training Club ([www.dpdtc.org](http://www.dpdtc.org)). For more information call 961-1891.

Pictured below, active canine student and DPDTC Clubmember Curry (age two) displays what she and her owner, resident Roger Burnell, brought home from AKC events held in June. In the eleven competitions in which Curry competed, she earned nine first-place ribbons and one second-place ribbon. Roger noted: "Quite honestly, one cannot expect such a weekend, nor such a 'run' more than once in a lifetime, but it illustrates what is available right in our own backyard."

Well-deserved ribbons have also gone to other proud LAH teams: Linda Kirk with Red, Jan Brassington with Hilde, Elissa Hirsch with Lotus, and Linda Nicholson with the threesome of Quincey, Zina, and Willow. Other winners include Los Altos residents Elaine Gray with Beau, and Ann Gaskell with Norman. Burnell added, "We have a whole world of wonderful, supportive people available to us and our loyal, lovable pets. This chemistry can stir up massive underestimated and untapped potential."

So go ahead and give yourself and your favorite canine companion a "fresh leash on life"

by signing up for Rally Obedience Training and enjoying the many benefits of a well-trained pet.





## Holiday Barn Lighting

**D**ecember 6, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, at Westwind Barn. Bring the entire family out for this free and special event that has become a town holiday tradition. Spend the afternoon in the fresh air at Westwind Barn, sampling home baked cookies and hot cider or wine tasting with local vintners while kids participate in games, craft tables and face painting activities. Listen to local student groups perform traditional carols and holiday music. Santa will be available for last minute holiday wish list updates and a tasty candy cane treat. Local Pony Club

and 4H students will demonstrate horse grooming and horse management skills and answer questions on how you can participate in their programs. The lighting ceremony will occur at 4:00 pm. Following the lighting ceremony, Santa will ride off into the sunset.

## Winter Riding Camp

**D**ecember 19 - 23, 8:30 am - 1:00 pm, at Westwind Barn. Looking for a program during the winter break for your kids? This camp is for beginners and for novice riders who wish to learn or improve upon their riding and horsemanship skills. Children are divided into groups by age and skill level and are continuously supervised by experienced instructors. Campers will learn the basic balance position developed by the United States Pony Club and how the movements of the rider's body influence the horse's movement. Our riding instruction

also includes games, exercises for rider and horse and cavaletti work. We aim to foster a life-long love of responsible riding with the care and safety of the rider and horse paramount. For more information, call 650-941-7222 or visit [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/parks-and-recreation](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/parks-and-recreation).

## Horsemanship Clinic

**F**ebruary 27, 2010 (March 6 rain date), 1:00 - 4:00 pm. The Los Altos Hills Horseman's Association (LAHHA) is



sponsoring a special hands-on horsemanship clinic at the newly renovated Purissima Park Riding Arena, 27400 Purissima Road.

Come learn the extraordinary and remarkable "language of the horse" that will bring the freedom and joy to your horsemanship that you truly want. Please come whether you own a horse or not. This clinic is suitable for all people interested in horses, regardless of age or experience, and not just for experienced riders. The clinic is free but you must RSVP - space is limited. In the workshop, the instructor will work with three different horses, explaining what she is doing and why. This is invaluable information and experience even for those who just love horses and simply want to know more about them. Gail Ivey is a long time student of Harry Whitney and has been training professionally since 1986. Gail sums up her approach this way: "It isn't about what you need the horse to do. It's about what the horse needs you to do to help him/her understand." For more information please email LAHHA coordinator Deborah Goldeen at [Pacbelino@pacbell.net](mailto:Pacbelino@pacbell.net)

## WESTWIND 4H Halloween Celebration

**F**or the last 30 years Westwind 4-H (horse riding for the disabled) has celebrated Halloween with "trick-or-treat on horseback" — a ride around the neighborhood of Westwind Barn to collect treats from nearby residents.

This year was no different and the weather couldn't have been more beautiful. Riders, volunteers, and even the horses donned costumes. Twelve of our 4-H disabled riders, together with dozens of youth and adult volunteers tramped through the neighborhood collecting treats from residents who have come to expect this annual event and look forward to it as much as the riders and volunteers who participate.





# THE SENTINEL

**D**uring the summer and fall months when the weather is hot, dry, and windy, residents of Los Altos Hills are

always worried about possible wildland fires and potential loss of homes. This risk level is constantly being monitored – not by some subjective human assessment of Red, Amber, or Green Alert, but by a Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) stationed in the hills above Foothill College by our local Fire Department.

The RAWS is solar powered and collects data automatically every hour. This data is then transmitted into the National Weather Information Management System (WIMS) and to the Santa Clara County Fire Department. It includes ambient temperature, fuel moisture level, wind direction and speed, relative humidity, fuel temperature, rain and solar radiation. This raw data is then processed through the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) computer program, which calculates and produces indexes that predict expected fire behavior and control problems. These indexes are sent to our Fire Station at Foothill College as well as the county-level dispatch center three times daily.

Our Fire Department uses these indexes to increase readiness levels for fire emergencies during peak risk periods. Extra equipment is held in a state of immediate readiness, and staffing levels are augmented during critical fire weather patterns. The Santa Clara County Fire Department uses the “Burn Index” to determine the response level, which it will initially dispatch to a fire. This is an open-ended number, which is directly related to how fire behavior is expected to affect the effort of containing a fire. This index typically starts low in the morning hours, increases through midday and typically peaks between 3:00 and 4:00 pm in the afternoon. This allows the dispatch level to increase as

the potential for severe fire behavior increases. The initial attack dispatch levels are:

**Low** (burn index 0-29): one fire engine

**Medium** (30-59): two fire engines, one four-wheel drive engine, one Battalion Chief

**High** (60 +): four fire engines, two four-wheel drive engines, two Battalion Chiefs. If needed, additional Santa Clara County Fire resources can also be dispatched which are equivalent to the third of these levels, before having to request mutual aid from surrounding jurisdictions.

The weather station provides a constant stream of accurate and timely weather information. This greatly enhances the ability of our Los Altos Hills County Fire District to react quickly and with the right level of resources to aggressively respond to the special risks we face in our rural environment.



# DRAMA KING



**T**his school year, Bullis Charter School welcomed Jeff Clarke as the school's Drama Specialist. A graduate of the U.C. Santa Cruz Drama program, Jeff worked for 10 years as a professional actor, director, dramaturge, fight choreographer, and dialect coach. His acting experiences have taken him from Los Angeles to Nashville, and finally back to the Bay Area. He maintains close ties with the local theatre community, working with City Lights of San Jose and the Los Altos Bus Barn Stage Company, to name a few. In 2008, Jeff received his teaching credential from San Jose State University and joined Bullis in January 2009.

In his role at BCS, Jeff provides drama classes integrated into the school's curriculum. Students learn a variety of skills including public speaking, improvisation, movement, stage fighting, choreography, stage commands, monologues, script-

writing, auditioning, and short script performances. Jeff also produces and directs a minimum of four stage productions each year at BCS. The community is invited to the first two productions of the school year:

- "An Evening With Aesop" on Nov. 19 & 20 at 7:00 pm, Nov. 21 at 6:00 pm. Filled with wonderful characters, and adapted for the stage, this delightful production gives students in grades 1 - 3 a chance to develop

their acting and dance skills in a fun-filled environment.

- "Hospital" on Dec. 10 & 11 at 7:00 pm, Dec. 12 at 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm. Set at the chaotic healthcare facility known as Bedside Manor, Tim Kelly's Hospital is a play filled with oddball characters,

lightning-quick wit, and fast-paced action. The BCS 4th through 6th graders are sure to provide a fun-filled evening for all.

All performances are held at Bullis Charter School located at 102 West Portola Avenue, Los Altos. For information please call 650-947-4939.



## BCS is Now Enrolling for K-6 and the New 7th Grade



**B**ullis Charter School's Open Enrollment period for next fall is now under way. Since its inception, the success of BCS has been achieved through an unwavering commitment toward educating the whole child. BCS will be building upon this award-winning vision into the middle school years, one of the most important periods for a child's personal growth and future academic success. Students in the new 7th grade class will enjoy innovative programs unique to a small K-8 public school environment:

- Rigorous academic curricula including Science and Engineering modeled upon national standards
- Highly qualified staff with National Board and specially certified teachers
- Block and intercession schedules that support interdisciplinary and project-based learning
- Music, Drama, Physical Education, Art, and Foreign Language classes as part of the regular program
- Unparalleled enrichment opportunities to promote risk-taking and leadership skills
- Focused Learning Goals and mentors to meet individual needs and nurture special talents

Interested parents and residents are invited to attend one of the Parent Information Nights specifically about the 7th grade program on January 7, 2010 at 7:00 pm in the Bullis Charter School Multi-Purpose Room. K-6 Parent Information nights will be held December 8, and January 12, 2010.





## WALKING ON Sunshine

The students at Gardner Bullis Elementary School were Walking on Sunshine at their annual walk-a-thon on October 11th. Under sunny skies and with high spirits, 223 walkers and their families enjoyed music, games, food and camaraderie. The theme this year was "Walking on Sunshine" and opening ceremonies included all of the students performing a dance they had learned to go with the song. While the final tally is not yet in, students in combination with corporate donations raised more than \$20,000! The Gardner Bullis families would like to thank all those in the Los Altos and Los Altos Hills community who supported this fabulous event!

## Multi-year transfers for PAUSD students

Residents of the portion of Los Altos Hills served by Palo Alto Union School District (PAUSD) are familiar with their standard public-school matriculation from Nixon Elementary School to Terman Middle School to Gunn High School. Under a unique, joint arrangement between PAUSD and the Los Altos School District (LASD); PAUSD families living in the Hills can also receive multi-year transfers (good for up to 7 years) to Gardner Bullis Elementary School, located near Town Hall and return to PAUSD with the same priority as other PAUSD students entering Terman for the 6th grade, just the same as Nixon Elementary students and those from other PAUSD feeder schools.

The typical matriculation under this arrangement would be Gardner Bullis to Terman Middle School to Gunn High School.

Gardner Bullis, formerly Bullis-Purissima, is an excellent school conveniently located at 25890 Fremont Road, near Town Hall. It reopened in August 2008 after extensive renovations. To learn more about the school visit [www.gardnerbullis.org](http://www.gardnerbullis.org).

For parents with students entering Kindergarten, an information meeting will be held at Gardner Bullis in January 2010.

If this will be your first transfer request to Gardner Bullis, at the same time as you fill out LASD enrollment forms, you will need to complete an Inter-District Transfer (IDT) as described at [www.pausd.org/parents/registration/Transfers.shtml](http://www.pausd.org/parents/registration/Transfers.shtml). FAQs regarding registration and transfers, which begins in January can be found on the town website: [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/city-government/standing-committees/education](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/city-government/standing-committees/education).

For questions regarding the PAUSD IDT process contact Margie Mitchell, PAUSD Central Attendance Supervisor at 329-3761 [mmitchell@pausd.org](mailto:mmitchell@pausd.org). For questions regarding LASD enrollment or transfers contact Marcy Birnie, Executive Assistant to LASD Superintendent at 947-1152 [mbirnie@losaltos.k12.ca.us](mailto:mbirnie@losaltos.k12.ca.us).



## IS SOLAR RIGHT FOR YOU?

In September the Environmental Initiatives Committee sponsored an educational forum for residents considering solar energy systems.

Mike Balma from Solar Solutions spoke about solar photovoltaic electricity ("PV") systems and what you can do:

**Roofs:** You will get the most power output from a South or Southwest facing area with minimal shading during afternoon hours. You'll need 500-1,000 square feet. Using tile roofs or multiple roof areas will increase the installation cost somewhat. When the roof is replaced, this will require removing and reinstalling solar panels.

**Electricity bills:** PG&E's rates are much higher for upper "tiers" of consumption, the more you use, the more you're charged. Most LAH homes consume plenty of power in these expensive upper tiers. One approach is to size your PV system to replace your consumption in the top two rate tiers. Another approach is to

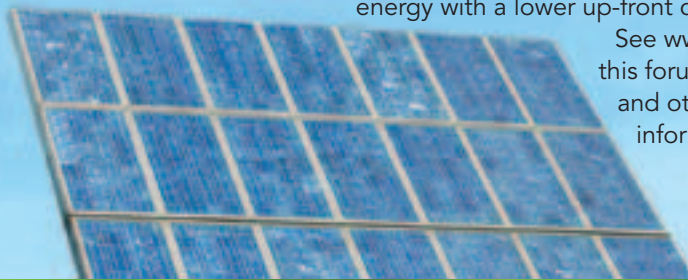
size your system to replace your daytime ("peak") electricity use and convert your PG&E service to time-of-use rates. A third approach is to size your system to replace all of your annual electricity consumption.

**Incentives:** California offers a rebate of \$1,100 per kilowatt, and the federal government offers a tax credit of 30% of the cost of the system. The California rebate is declining, but so is the cost of PV systems.

An installer will help you evaluate these three elements for your particular situation. A system sized to replace an LAH home's top-tier or peak electricity use can have a payback of less than 8 years after rebates.

Additional speakers provided information on today's solar hot water systems, which also qualify for rebates and can enable you to use the sun's energy with a lower up-front cost.

See [www.lahgreen.org](http://www.lahgreen.org) for this forum's presentations and other environmental information.



## State Finalizes Model Water-Efficient Landscape Ordinance

All cities are required by January 1, 2010, to adopt the State Model Ordinance or their own equally-efficient landscape ordinance. The Water Conservation Committee (WCC) has reviewed the Model Ordinance and is recommending that we develop our own equally efficient ordinance.

Passed by the California legislature in 2006, AB 1881 will require LAH to adopt a water efficient landscape ordinance which will apply to new

housing and major remodels. It expands on AB 325, which has been in effect since the early 1990's but did not apply to private residences.

This past August, after a three year effort the Department of Water Resources (DWR) released the final version of the Model Water-Efficient Landscape Ordinance ([www.water.ca.gov/wateruseefficiency/docs/MOBrochure.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/wateruseefficiency/docs/MOBrochure.pdf)).

The Model Ordinance does not fit the unique characteristics of LAH, and in fact, the WCC feels it would impose bureaucratic

documentation and review requirements without reducing water use. The Model Ordinance focuses on water use per square foot, and our acre parcels would allow Ordinance-conforming landscapes to use water at over twice the current average water use. The bay area water districts are collectively working on model alternatives that will include relatively simple landscape plans, best practices, and some restrictions on high use planting such as turf. This model appears to better fit our Town and, more importantly, provides the applicant a realistic picture of future water use.





# THE HEALTH of THE OAK TREE



Earlier this year, volunteers collected leaf samples from California Bay trees in Los Altos Hills and six other Bay area regions as part of a "S.O.D. Blitz" project to map the location of *Phytophthora ramorum*, the pathogen that causes Sudden Oak Death (S.O.D.). Enthusiastic LAH volunteers submitted 171 samples from locations throughout the Town.

At a November 7th meeting sponsored by the LAH Open Space Committee, Dr. Matteo Garbelotto, U.C. Berkeley professor of Environmental Science and organizer of the project, reported the LAH test results and discussed S.O.D. management options. The 2009 S.O.D. mapping results can be viewed at: <http://nature.berkeley.edu/garbelotto/english/index.php>.

Although only about 6% of the samples collected in LAH were positive for the pathogen, the disease is expected to continue to spread and residents are encouraged to learn about S.O.D., monitor their Bays and oaks, and participate in next year's sampling Blitz. Management options include sanitation, chemical preventative treatments, and removal of Bays, but they are effective only if implemented before oaks are infected. Hence, timely detection of the disease on Bay Laurel leaves and early preventive treatment of susceptible trees offer the best chance to protect oaks and slow the epidemic.

The S.O.D. Blitz project is funded by grants from the U.S. Forest Service and private forestry. For more information on S.O.D., visit: [www.suddenoakdeath.org](http://www.suddenoakdeath.org).



## EIC Forum: Lower Your PG&E Bill

Join us for a free educational forum, Wednesday, December 9th at 7:00 pm in Council Chambers, to learn how to lower your utility bill. Hear from experts about wasted energy in Los Altos Hills homes and learn about specific "comfortable conservation" methods for high-energy homes. For best results bring your utility bills that indicate your home's annual electric use (kWhs) and gas use (therms). Contact Lew Jamison at (650) 949-3979 or [rsvp to eic.forums@lahgreen.org](mailto:rsvp to eic.forums@lahgreen.org)

## Turf Talk A Success – Video Available

The LAH Water Conservation Committee, Purissima Hills Water District, and California Water hosted Turf Talk on September 9th. The event was attended by 110 people who filled LAH Town Hall to hear Foothill College Instructor Frank Niccoli discuss water usage and turf. His highly animated and informative talk spanned the spectrum from the cost of watering your grass to the virtues of planting Buffalo Grass. Those who missed the event can see the video at [www.viddler.com/explore/johnh555/videos/3/](http://www.viddler.com/explore/johnh555/videos/3/).



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#### Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official town newsletter to communicate current issues, services and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the Town — to facilitate, encourage and improve interaction between the residents and the Town government. The newsletter is published quarterly. **Deadline for the next issue is January 15, 2010.**

Printed with soy-based inks. International Paper, the manufacturer of the paper, has earned Sustainable Forestry Initiative and Forestry Stewardship Council dual certification.

[www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)

#### Our Town

The town newsletter is published with assistance from the Town Volunteer Committees.

Editor: Dorothy Duffy Price

Associate Editors: Roger Burnell, Nancy Couperus, Joan Sherlock, Patty Woolsey, Roy Woolsey

Photography: Alexander Atkins, Joel Bartlett, Jitze Couperus, Kathy Evans

#### Los Altos Hills City Council

Dean Warshawsky, Mayor  
Breene Kerr, Vice Mayor  
Rich Larsen  
Jean Mordo  
Ginger Summit

# CALENDAR



**Nov  
29**

**Sunday, 6:00-7:00 pm**  
**Los Altos Festival of Lights Parade**  
Downtown Los Altos. This is one of the most popular Los Altos events of the year and draws people of all ages the first Sunday after Thanksgiving. The Town of Los Altos Hills Parks and Recreation will be sponsoring the Mother Goose float, which will be tenth in the line up. For more information call 650-996-8015 or visit [www.losaltosparade.com](http://www.losaltosparade.com).

**Dec  
6**

**Sunday, 9:30 am**  
**Pathway Walk with Nick Duncel.**  
Meet at the parking lot of the Town Barn near 27240 Altamont. Nick, Chairman of the Pathway Committee, will lead the walk. The walk will take about an 1.5 hours and will cover a little over 3 miles. All interested persons are welcome. For more information call: 650-948-5777.

**6**

**Sunday, 1:00-4:00 pm**  
**Holiday Barn Lightning**  
Westwind Community Barn. Visit with Santa, cookies & cider, crafts, entertainment and more.

**12**

**Saturday, 6:30-9:30 pm**  
**Holiday Tree Lighting and Movie Night; Holiday Party!**  
Los Altos Hills Families present a tree lighting event and movie night at Town Hall. Families will gather to light the heritage oak at town hall, then separate into young families and teens for a movie and eggnog. For more information, visit [www.lahfamily.com](http://www.lahfamily.com).

**13**

**Sunday, 7:00 - 9:00 pm**  
**Holiday Caroling at Town Hall**  
Scott Vanderlip leads the Annual Holiday Caroling. Kids and adults meet at the Parks & Recreation Bldg. for brief rehearsal then tour nearby neighborhoods. Dress warmly and bring a flashlight.

Cookies and Cider after the event. Contact: Scott Vanderlip at 650-948-6455.

**Jan  
14**

**Thursday, 11:00 - 12 noon**  
**Walk and Talk with Artist Goodwin "Goody" Steinberg**  
Town Hall  
Join Goody Steinberg as he explains how he uses technology, art and music to design his oversized, original graphic art prints. The prints were originally shown at the Tech Museum in San Jose. Contact: Town Hall 650-941-7222 or Curator, Karen Druker 650-941-8073, [kadruker@pacbell.net](mailto:kadruker@pacbell.net).

**March  
21**

**Sunday, 2:00 - 5:00 pm**  
**Art Show Opening & Reception**  
Town Hall  
Artists Pat Sherwood and Neil Boor display their abstract art forms depicting landscapes derived from nature. Contact: Town Hall 650-941-7222 or Curator, Karen Druker 650-941-8073, [kadruker@pacbell.net](mailto:kadruker@pacbell.net).



Calendar events are also posted on Town's website: [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)

